

(ख) बोर्ड आफ इन्क्वायरी बिठाए गए हैं और दुर्घटनाओं के कारणों की जांच हो रही है।

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI A. M. THOMAS): (a) Yes, Sir. A naval aircraft was involved in an accident, on 20-7-64 which resulted in the death of three naval Lieutenants.

An I.A.F. aircraft accident occurred on 21-7-64 in which the instructor officer and trainee on board were both killed.

(b) Boards of Enquiry have been convened and the causes of the accidents are under investigation.]

ENQUIRY COMMITTEE ON SCIENTIST'S DEATH

[surer N. SRI RAMA

(54. ^ REDDY:

L SHRI U. S. DUGAL:

Win the PRIME MINISTER be pleas.J TO ,;tate v'. . ;cal Com- mittee which was appointed to hold an enquiry into the accidental death of Shri Promod Darbari, a scientist, has submitted its report?

THE PRIME MINISTER ^HRI L^L BHADUR): Yes.

A statement giving the full facts of the case is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

A press release was issued on July 17, 1964, regarding an accident which occurred in a Laboratory at Trombay on the previous day, resulting in the unfortunate death of the group leader, Shri Promod Darbari. It vva; then announced that a Technical Committee had been appointed to hold an enquiry.

2. The Committee consisted of the Director, Chemical Group (Chairman), the Director, Metallurgy Group, the Head, Reactor Engineering and

Reactor Operations Divisions, the Head, Chemical Engineering Division, the Head, Health Physics Division and a representative of the Industrial Hygiene and Safety Group of the Health Physics Division. The Committee started examining witnesses on July 18, but was unable to submit its report till August 18, as the only eyewitness, Shri N. A. Khan, had been admitted into hospital on the day of the accident for treatment of burns and observation for possible delayed effects due to benzene fumes. No such effects manifested themselves and he was discharged on August 5. A copy of the post mortem report was obtained on August 27 and it records 'From the history and post mortem appearance cause of death is acute pulmonary edema which would be caused by inhalation of poisonous or irritant gasses such as benzene'. This confirms the Committee's view that the cause of death was inhalation of benzene vapour.

8. Shri Promod Darbari was testing equipment for a small scale unit for the purification of para-terphenyl, which is used for the production of scintillators, using benzene as a solvent. Briefly, the experiment involves heating impure paraterphenyl in benzene in a still, passing the hot solution through a filter and collecting the liquid in another vessel. This method of purification had been carried out for the last 2 years in an all-glass assembly and, as benzene presents certain hazards, a special survey report had been prepared by the Industrial Hygiene & Safety Group of the Radiation Hazards Control Section of the Health Physics Division, giving the precautions to be observed in handling benzene. As the quantity of para-terphenyl required had increased considerably, it was recently decided to increase production and to substitute glass by stainless steel as far as possible. This new equipment had worked satisfactorily on previous occasions and, when the accident took place, it was doing its 8th run.

f[] English translation.

4. Shri Darbari had started the 8th | run, the third run of the day, by switching on the heater and setting the dimmerstat at the maximum voltage, when he was joined by his assistant Shri N. A. Khan. The first 18 litres of solution were transferred to the collecting vessel without mishap, though the heat was not turned down. The collecting vessel was changed and Shri Darbari got back on to the stool to transfer another batch. He held the 3" rubber bung in the still with his left hand and put another rubber bung with his right hand in the free end of the condenser and held it to transfer the solution by air pressure. Another 4 or 5 litres of the solution were transferred, again without lowering the heat. Then the 3" bung on the still suddenly came off, presumably as a result of build up of pressure, and hot solution and vapour spurted on to Shri Darbari's face and body. He moved away to wipe his face. Shri Khan also moved away but went back to switch off the power. As he did this there was a spark and the fumes ignited. Shri Khan, who had received some burns, climbed over the laboratory table, went into the corridor and shouted 'Fire'. In spite of Shri Khan's warning, Shri Darbari started to go back into the area (of the same laboratory) where the accident had occurred but he came out into the corridor a few seconds later. There he staggered, supported himself against the railings and then fell down.

5. Shri Darbari was carried to the top of the stairs, near a bathroom, where water was sprinkled on his face and he also drank a little. Shri Khan in the meanwhile had walked downstairs on his own. Shri Darbari was put on a sofa and artificial respiration was tried. Within 10 minutes of the accident, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer was of the scene and Shri Darbari and Shri Khan were immediately taken in his transport to the Medical Room. Though the Medical Officer found no signs of life,

he nevertheless gave a coramine injection, and oxygen and artificial respiration, but without success.

6. The Government of India deeply regret the death of this young and enthusiastic scientific worker who, though fatally affected, attempted to go back to his place of duty.

U.N. CHIEF OBSERVER'S AWARD ON CEASE-FIRE LINE

65. SHRI M. C. SHAH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently the United Nations Chief Observer has given awards, wherein Pakistan been charged with a well planned attack by an organised armed party on 21st July, 1964 in the Mendhar and Nausher? Sectors and also with crossing the cease-fire line and firing on the Indian positions; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken by Government to counteract these illegal activities of Pakistan Government?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI A. M. THOMAS): (a) The two incidents took place on 21st June 1964; and not 21st July, 1964. In the Mendhar incident, the U.N. Chief Military Observer found that Pakistan had violated the ceasefire line by making a well-planned attack by an organised armed party. In the Naushera incident, the Military Observer, while giving an award against Pakistan, stated that an armed group of Pakistani troops crossed the cease-fire line and fired on Indian positions.

(b) Suitable precautionary measures have been taken. Also Government have lodged protests with the Government of Pakistan in regard to these incidents. They have also been brought to the notice of the Security Council.